

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method, comprising:  
sending power to at least one radio frequency (RF) identification (RFID) transponder (-tag), including:  
sending power  $P_j$  for a first time interval  $t_j$  to the at least one tag at a first frequency  $f_j$  chosen from a list of  $N$  frequencies  $f_1, f_2, f_{j+1}, \dots, f_N$ , and  
sending power  $P_{j+1}$  for a time interval  $t_{j+1}$  to the at least one tag at a second frequency  $f_{j+1}$  chosen from the list of  $N$  frequencies, wherein  $t_j$  and  $t_{j+1}$  are different time intervals of different lengths, and wherein the time between sending power  $P_j$  and  $P_{j+1}$  is less than a time  $t_0$  in which the at least one tag loses a particular tag function if no power is sent to the tag.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein  $t_{j+1}$  is chosen to be long enough that all tags in operative communication with the base station at frequency  $f_{j+1}$  have identified themselves.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the sending of power  $P_{j+1}$  is stopped after the time interval  $t_{j+1}$  when no further tags identify themselves.
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein  $P_j$  and  $P_{j+1}$  are different powers.
5. (Previously Presented) The method claim 4, wherein  $P_{j+1}$  is reduced from  $P_j$  when  $t_j$  is too short a time for all tags in operative communication with the base station to have identified themselves.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein  $|t_{j+1} - t_j| > 0.05 (t_j + t_{j+1})$ .
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein  $|t_{j+1} - t_j| > 0.1 (t_j + t_{j+1})$ .
8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein  $|t_{j+1} - t_j| > .3 (t_j + t_{j+1})$ .
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein  $P_j$  is a function of time.
10. (Original) The method of claim 9, wherein  $P_j$  is a monotonically increasing function of time.
11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 10, wherein  $P_j$  is increased when no further tags identify themselves. ~~{-}~~
12. (Currently Amended) A method of frequency hopping, comprising:  
sending a first power at a first frequency to a plurality of tags during a first time interval having a first length;  
receiving responses from the plurality of tags; and  
sending a second power at a second frequency to the plurality of tags ~~when-if~~ the a time between received responses exceeds a response time, the second power being sent during a second time interval having a second length that is different than the first length of the first time interval.
13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the response time is less than a flag reset time  $t_0$  of a tag of the plurality of tags.
14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the response time is less than a tag power down time.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, wherein the response time is less than 20 milliseconds.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 12, further comprising sending the second power at the second frequency to the plurality of tags during the second time interval ~~when-if~~ no response is received from the plurality of tags for the response time.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 12, further comprising sending the second power at the second frequency to the plurality of tags when a total time of sending the first power at the first frequency exceeds a protocol time limit  $t_{\max}$ .

18. (Currently Amended) A RFID system, comprising:  
at least a first antenna; and  
a base station communicatively coupled to at least the first antenna and operable to:

send a first power at a first frequency to a plurality of tags during a first time interval having a first length,

receive responses from the plurality of tags, and

send a second power at a second frequency to the plurality of tags ~~when-if~~ the-a time between received responses exceeds a response time, the second power being sent during a second time interval having a second length that is different than the first length of the first time interval.

19. (Currently Amended) A RFID system, comprising:  
a plurality of tags; and  
a base station operable to send a first power at a first frequency to the plurality of tags during a first time interval having a first length, receive responses from the plurality of tags, and send a second power at a second frequency to the plurality of tags ~~when-if~~ the-a time between received responses exceeds a response time, the base station operable to send the second

power during a second time interval having a second length that is different than the first length of the first time interval.

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 19, wherein ~~the base station is further operable to send the first power at the first frequency for a first time interval and send the second power at the second frequency for a second time interval, the first length of the first time interval being~~ is different greater than the second length of the second time interval.

21. (Currently Amended) A RFID system, comprising:  
means for sending a first power at a first frequency to a plurality of tags during a first time interval having a first length;  
means for receiving responses from the plurality of tags; and  
means for sending a second power at a second frequency to the plurality of tags when if the a time between received responses exceeds a response time, the second power being sent during a second time interval having a second length that is different than the first length of the first time interval.

22. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 21, ~~further comprising:~~  
~~means for sending the first power at the first frequency for a first time interval;~~  
~~and~~  
~~means for sending the second power at the second frequency for a second time interval;~~ wherein the first length of the first time interval is different greater than the second length of the second time interval.

23. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein sending the second power includes sending the second power after sending the first power.

24. (New) The method of claim 12 wherein sending the second power includes sending the second power after sending the first power.

25. (New) The system of claim 18 wherein the second power is sent after the first power.

26. (New) The system of claim 19 wherein the base station is operable to send the second power after the first power.

27. (New) The system of claim 21 wherein the means for sending the second power sends the second power after the means for sending the first power sends the first power.